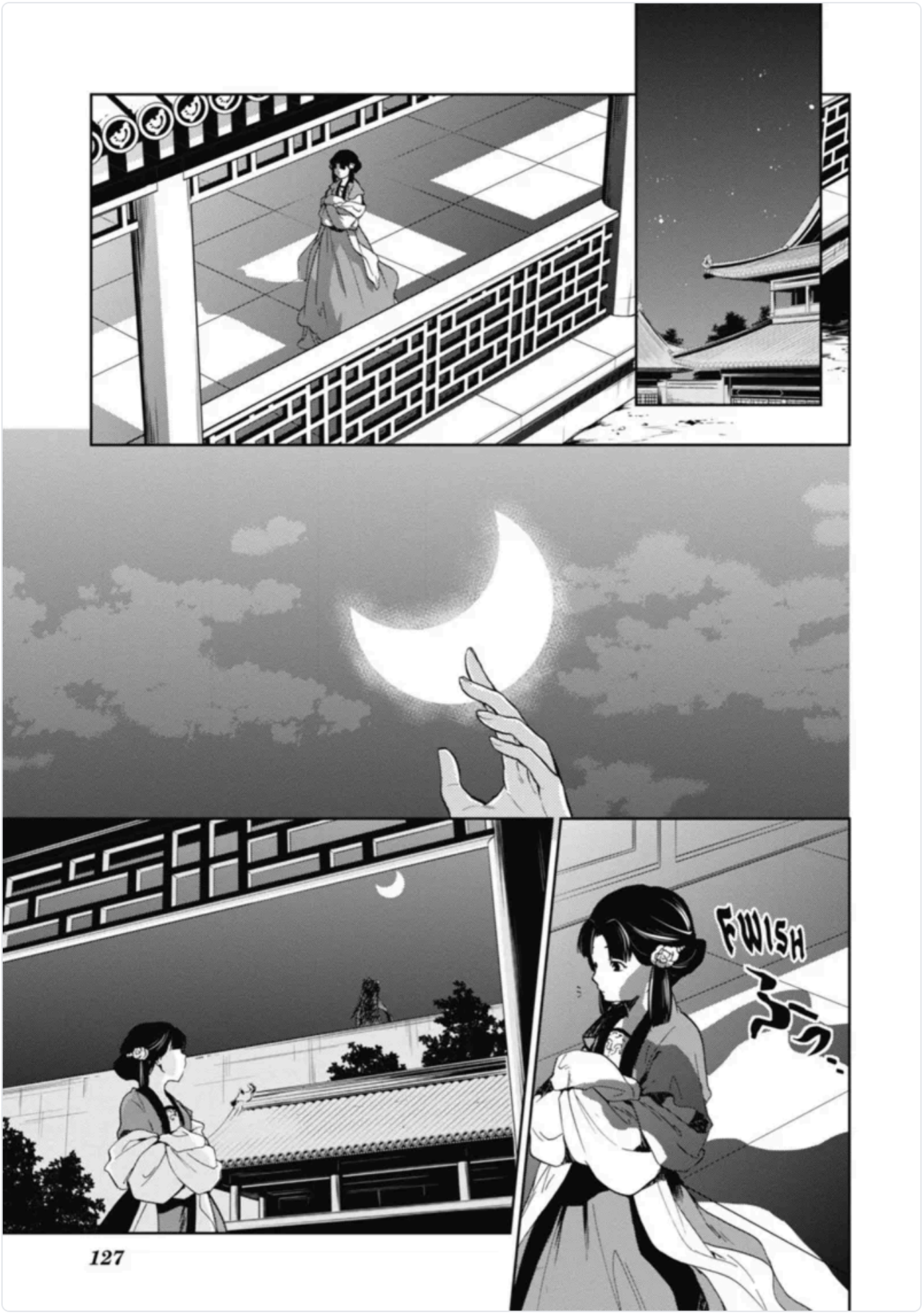
FWISH
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EEK!
AHHHH!

Chapter 4 The Moonlight Ghost

BUBBLE
BURBLE
THAT'S WHAT SHE SAID HAPPENED, AT LEAST.
I WONDER IF IT WAS THAT GHOST IN WHITE I'VE BEEN HEARING ABOUT LATELY.
YOU THINK SO TOO?!
I WALK BY THAT EXACT SPOT PRETTY OFTEN MYSELF!
HMM...
A GHOSTLY WOMAN DANCING ATOP THE PALACE WALLS, NIGHT AFTER NIGHT...
IT'S BEEN GOING ON FOR THE PAST MONTH OR SO.

THE INNER COURT IS ENCIRCLED BY WALLS AND A MOAT.
THE GATES LOCATED IN EACH CARDINAL DIRECTION ARE THE ONLY WAYS IN AND OUT.
EACH GATE IS GUARDED BY TWO EUNUCHS ON THE INSIDE...
...AND TWO GUARDS ON THE OUTSIDE.
IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO ESCAPE OR TO TRY TO SLIP IN THROUGH THEM.
IT'S SAID THAT AT THE BOTTOM OF THE DEEP MOAT BEYOND THE WALLS...
...LIE THE PAST CONCUBINES AND CONSORTS WHO TRIED TO FLEE.
THIS LATEST RUMOR ISN'T EVEN ALL THAT UNUSUAL FOR THE INNER COURT, WHERE GHOST STORIES ARE OFTEN PASSED AROUND.

I GUESS IT'S BECAUSE HE KNOWS I CAN MAKE MEDICINE...
...THAT HE'S STARTED BEING MORE CORDIAL TO ME.
MAY I TAKE A LOOK AT YOUR STORES?
OH, IT'S YOU, MISS.
JUST A MO-MENT.
I APPRE-CIATE HIM SHARING INGREDI-ENTS...
...BUT HE KNOWS ONLY THE BARE MINIMUM ABOUT CRAFTING REMEDIES HIMSELF.
AND EVEN IF I WERE TO OFFER TO MAKE THEM IN HIS PLACE...
...THAT WOULD BE BREAKING HIS DUTY OF CONFIDENTI-ALITY TO HIS PATIENTS.
GLUG
GLUG ぽとぽ
I'VE MADE US TEA.
HE'S A NICE ENOUGH GUY BUT TERRIBLE AT HIS JOB.
OH! HE'S EVEN GOT RICE CRACKERS!

!
I ALMOST FEEL LIKE I'M BEING BAITED HERE...
SWIPE
I'D LOVE SOME AS WELL.
...FAREWELL, MY RICE CRACKERS. I JUST KNOW THEY'LL BE REPLACED WITH WHITE TEA AND MOON-CAKES.
SOB しゅん…
Y-YES, RIGHT AWAY.

THANKS FOR PUTTING IN ANOTHER DAY OF HARD WORK!
I HARDLY DESERVE SUCH THANKS.
...BUT HE DOESN'T SEEM TO BE ATTACHED TO ANY ONE PLACE.
INSTEAD, IT'S AS IF HE'S OVERSEEING THE ENTIRE INNER COURT.
AS A EUNUCH, HE SHOULD BE IN THE OFFICES OF THE PALACE DOMESTIC SERVICE ...
JUST HOW MUCH FREE TIME DOES THIS GUY ACTUALLY HAVE?
THERE'S A CHANCE HE MIGHT EVEN BE A GUARDIAN OF THE EMPEROR, BUT HE'S FAR TOO YOUNG FOR THAT.
PERHAPS HE RANKS HIGHER THAN A DIRECTOR, THEN...

I'LL JUST GO AHEAD AND ASSUME HE'S THE EMPEROR'S LOVER.
HOO
HOO
HEH.
I'M NOT SURE WHAT YOU COULD POSSIBLY MEAN.
WHY DOES YOUR FACE SAY YOU'RE THINKING SOMETHING INCREDIBLY INDECENT RIGHT NOW?
CAN I TROUBLE YOU TO GET THESE FROM THE BACK FOR ME?
OH YES, DOC-TOR.
ゴソ RUSTLE
RUSTLE ゴソ

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...HE'S HERE BECAUSE HE WANTS SOMETHING FROM ME.
THAT TELLS ME...
びっしり
PACKED
WHY ARE YOU REALLY HERE?
SO?
DO YOU KNOW OF THIS GHOST EVERYONE'S BEEN TALKING ABOUT?

I'VE HEARD THE RUMORS.
THEN ...
...YOU KNOW IT'S A CASE OF SLEEP-WALKING.
SLEEP-WALK-ING!
IT'S NOT THAT HARD TO FIGURE OUT.
URK!
LEAN
HOW WOULD YOU CURE IT?

I DON'T KNOW.
AT THE VERY LEAST, I CAN TELL YOU IT'S NOT THE SORT OF THING THAT CAN BE CURED WITH MEDICINE.
BUT IS NOT THE VERY ESSENCE OF MEDI-CINE...
...TO CURE ANY AND ALL AFFLIC-TIONS?
MEDICINE IS MY AREA OF EXPERTISE, THANK YOU VERY MUCH.
FWIP
SWOOP
!

WHAT A PAIN!
WH...
HE STICKS TO YOU LIKE GLUE!
SHUDDER
SHUDDER
...I'LL SEE WHAT I CAN DO.

THAT GUY'S AIDE AGAIN...
HE'S VERY MASCULINE.
HE DOESN'T LOOK LIKE A TYPICAL EUNUCH AT ALL.
AS A RESULT OF HAVING THEIR MANHOODS, AND THUS THEIR YANG ENERGY, PHYSICALLY REMOVED ...
...MOST EUNUCHS GROW TO BE QUITE FEMININE.
THEIR BODY HAIR THINS, THEIR PERSONALITIES CALM.
LOSING THEIR APPETITE FOR SEX YIELDS AN INCREASE IN THEIR APPETITE FOR FOOD, SO THEY ALSO GAIN WEIGHT EASILY.

*XIAO MEANS "LITTLE."

YIKES...
...AND HE SEEMED RATHER HAPPY ABOUT IT.
ぞっ
SHIVER
UPON HIS RETURN, HE TOLD ME OF HOW YOU LOOKED AT HIM AS IF HE WERE A SLUG...
.....I WILL BE MORE CAREFUL FROM NOW ON.
PALE
サー
THERE MUST BE NO END TO THE HEAD-ACHES...
...OF BEING HIS ATTENDANT.
...SEE HIM IN THAT STATE OF BLISS.
IT COMPLICATES MATTERS WHEN THOSE WITH NO IMMUNITY TO SIR JINSHI'S CHARMS...
THANK YOU.

FWISH
THERE SHE IS.
UP THERE.

FWOOSH

SHE'S ALMOST LIKE...
...A COTTON ROSE IN THE MOON-LIGHT.
AN ASTUTE OBSER-VATION.
THAT IS LADY FUYO, NAMED FOR THE COTTON ROSE.

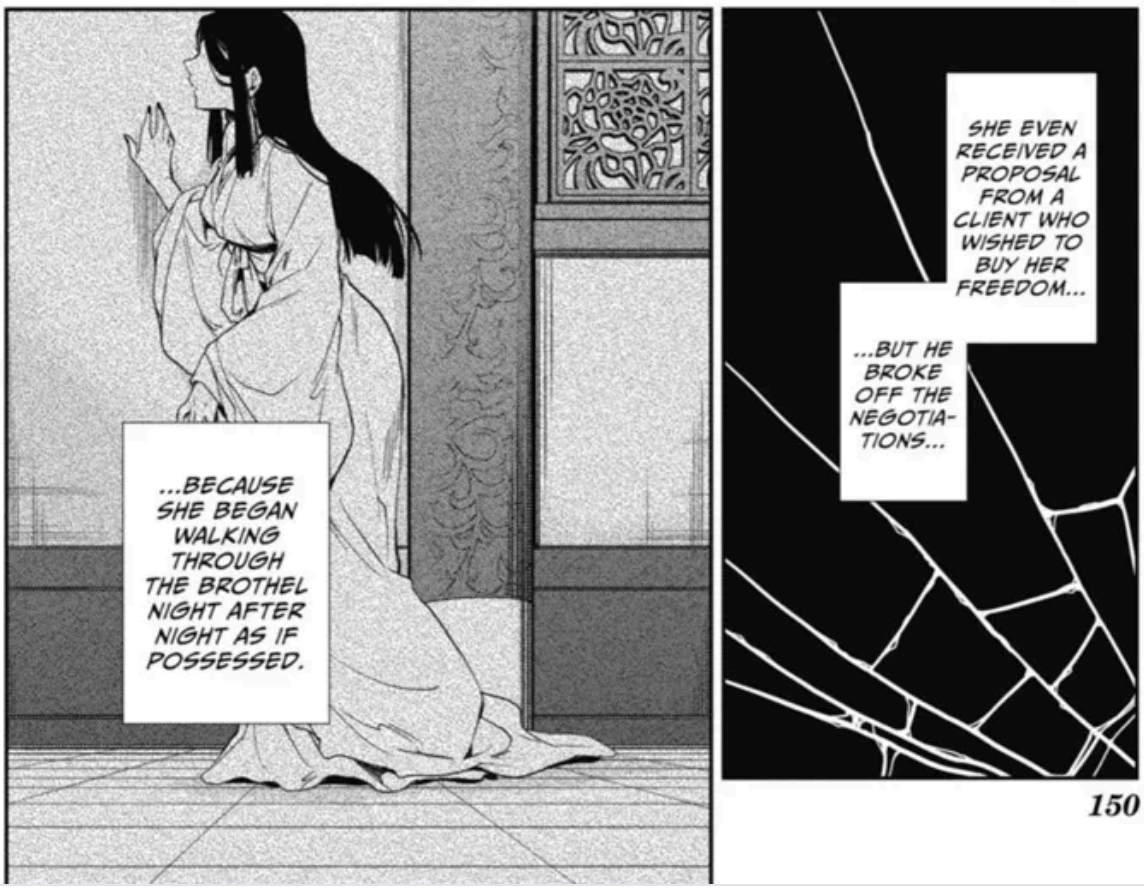
A PRINCESS WHO, IN A MONTH'S TIME...
...WILL BE GIFTED TO AN ARMY OFFICER IN REWARD FOR HIS DISTINGUISHED SERVICE.

NOW THAT YOU MENTION IT, LADY FUYO...
... HASN'T BEEN WELL OF LATE.
SHE'S A SENSITIVE PRINCESS, YOU KNOW...
SIGH
SHE ONCE ERRED WHILE DANCING DURING THE EMPEROR'S VISIT...
...AND HAS LOCKED HERSELF AWAY IN HER CHAMBERS EVER SINCE.
I'VE HEARD SHE'S THE THIRD PRINCESS OF A SMALL VASSAL STATE.
SHE'S BEEN AT THE INNER COURT FOR TWO YEARS, BUT SHE'S NEVER SPENT A NIGHT WITH THE EMPEROR.

WELL, I'VE HEARD THAT THE ARMY MAN SHE'S BEING GIVEN TO IS ACTUALLY A CHILDHOOD FRIEND...
...SO HOPEFULLY SHE FINDS HAPPINESS WITH HIM.
HMM...
SLEEP-WALKING IS AN AILMENT THAT'S NOT TERRIBLY WELL UNDER-STOOD.

EVEN THOUGH YOU'RE ASLEEP, YOU WALK AROUND AND ACT AS IF YOU'RE AWAKE.
THE CAUSE IS A CONFLICT OF THE HEART.
IT CAN'T BE CURED WITH MEDI-CINE.

I ONCE HAD A SLEEP-WALKING PATIENT WHO RESIDED IN A BROTHEL.
SHE WAS CHEERFUL AND GOOD AT POETRY.


...BECAUSE SHE BEGAN WALKING THROUGH THE BROTHEL NIGHT AFTER NIGHT AS IF POSSESSED.
SHE EVEN RECEIVED A PROPOSAL FROM A CLIENT WHO WISHED TO BUY HER FREEDOM...
...BUT HE BROKE OFF THE NEGOTIA-TIONS...

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THE NEXT MORNING, THE OTHER RESIDENT COURTESANS APPROACHED THE WOMAN CAUTIOUSLY.
WHEN THE BROTHEL-KEEPER TRIED TO STOP HER...
...THE WOMAN CLAWED AWAY WITH HER NAILS.
SEEING THEM, SHE SAID...
OH?
WHY DO YOU LOOK AT ME LIKE THAT?

THE COURTESAN HERSELF...
...HAD NO RECOLLEC-TION OF THE PREVIOUS NIGHT'S EVENTS.
AFTER THE TALKS FOR HER FREEDOM BROKE OFF...
...SHE CEASED HER NIGHTLY WANDER-ING.
SO WHAT HAPPENED THEN?
NOTHING.

THE MAN WHO MADE THE PROPO-SITION OWNED A LARGE STORE...
...BUT HE ALREADY HAD A WIFE AND CHILDREN... EVEN GRAND-CHILDREN.
MOST LIKELY.
I WONDER IF THAT MEANS SHE DIDN'T WANT HER FREEDOM TO BE BOUGHT?
YOU DON'T SAY.
BUT THEY JUST GAVE HER A LITTLE PEACE OF MIND. THEY WEREN'T ACTUAL CURES.
...SO I MADE HER BOTH MEDICINE AND INCENSE TO CALM HER.
MANY OF HER EPISODES OCCURRED AFTER SHE GREW EXTREMELY AGITATED...
...AND THAT WAS THAT.
...WITH NO OTHER OFFERS TO BUY HER FREEDOM, THE COURTESAN CONCLUDED HER TERM OF SERVICE...
IN THE END...

YES.
TRULY, NOW?
ARE YOU SURE ...?
HOLD IT IN!
STAY STRONG!

THAT'S ALL THERE IS TO THE STORY.
NOW IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME...
I HAVE TO GET BACK TO WORK.
BOW
IT DIDN'T DO THE TRICK...

CAN'T YOU AT LEAST TELL ME?
SMILE
THIS IS MERELY CONJEC-TURE...
...SO PLEASE DON'T TAKE ANY OFFENSE.
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I'M THE ONE ASKING. I WON'T GET UPSET.
WELL, IF YOU PROMISE NOT TO TELL ANYONE ...
MY LIPS ARE SEALED!
.....
TEE-HEE!

...IN ADDITION TO THE COURTESAN I MENTIONED BEFORE...
...THERE WAS ANOTHER WHO SUFFERED FROM SLEEPWALKING AND SIMILARLY HAD NEGOTIA-TIONS FOR HER FREEDOM FALL THROUGH.

AS IT TURNED OUT, HOW-EVER...
...THAT COURTESAN LATER WOUND UP WITH A SECOND OFFER FOR HER FREEDOM.

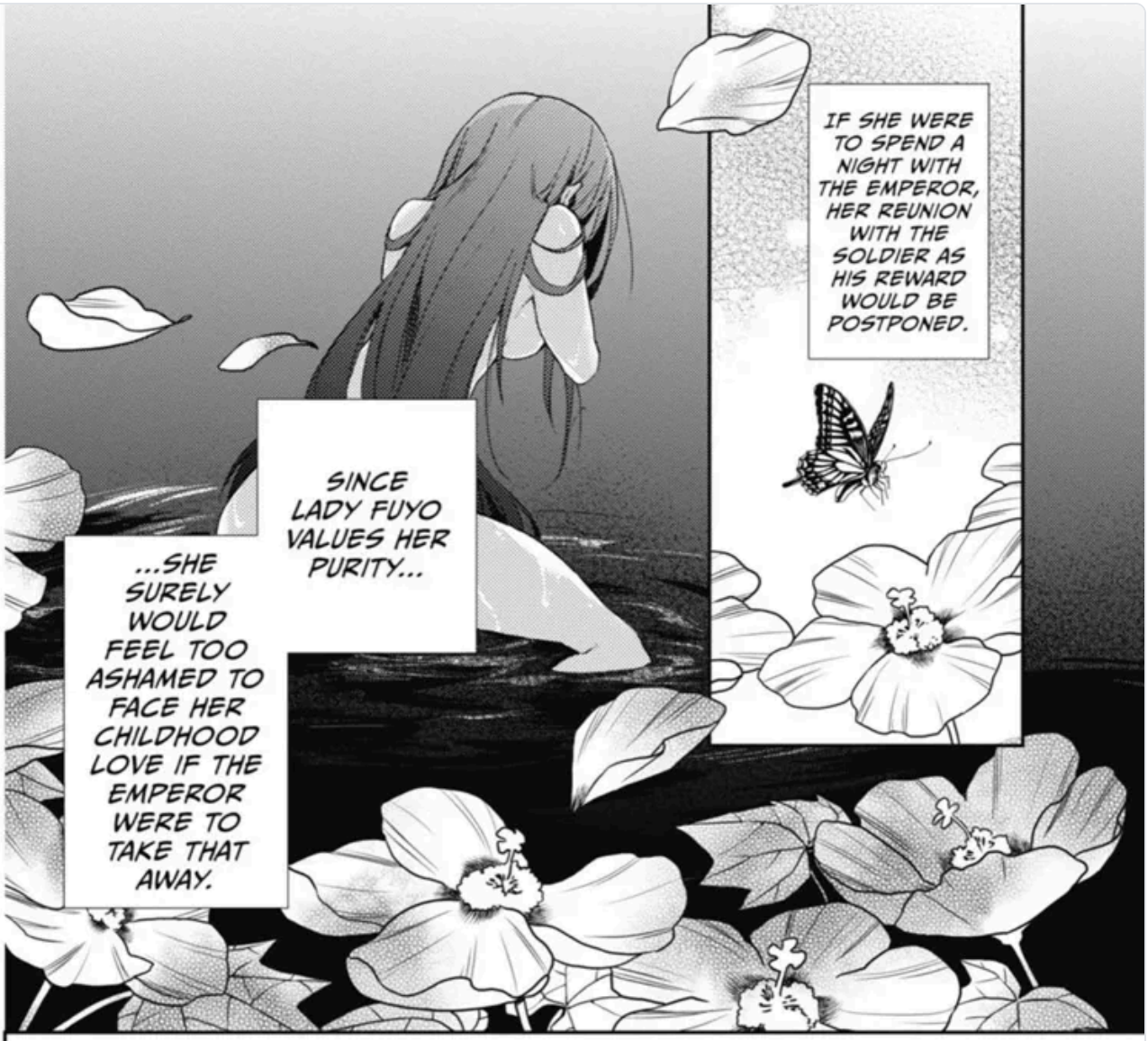
HOWEVER, THE MAN PERSISTED.
... TURNED HIM DOWN.
I CANNOT BEAR THE IDEA OF ALLOWING YOU TO TAKE ON AN ILL COURTESAN.
THE MADAM THERE ...
EVENTUALLY, THEY AGREED ON A PRICE OF HALF THE SILVER FROM THE ORIGINAL AGREEMENT.
BUT...
...IT WAS ALL A RUSE.

THE FIRST MAN WHO HAD TRIED TO BUY HER FREEDOM ...
...WAS AN ACQUAINTANCE OF THE SECOND.
HOW SO?
AND THEN ...
...THE MAN TO WHOM SHE TRULY WANTED HER FREEDOM SOLD WAS ABLE TO BUY IT FOR HALF THE PRICE.
THE WOMAN FEIGNED ILLNESS TO NULLIFY THE INITIAL OFFER.
...WHILE THE MAN'S HANDS WERE TIED BY THE LACK OF SILVER.
THE COURTESAN WAS BOUND TO THE TERMS OF HER CONTRACT ...

SO YOU MEAN TO SAY LADY FUYO IS PRETENDING WITH THE SAME INTENT?
AS I SAID, THIS IS JUST MY GUESS.
A MERE SOLDIER IS IN NO POSITION TO ASK FOR A PRINCESS'S HAND IN MARRIAGE.
SO THE PLAN WAS TO ACCU-MULATE MERITS FOR HIS MILITARY FEATS...
...BEFORE EVENTUALLY RETURNING TO MAKE THE PRINCESS HIS.
BUT THE PRINCESS WAS SENT TO THE INNER COURT.

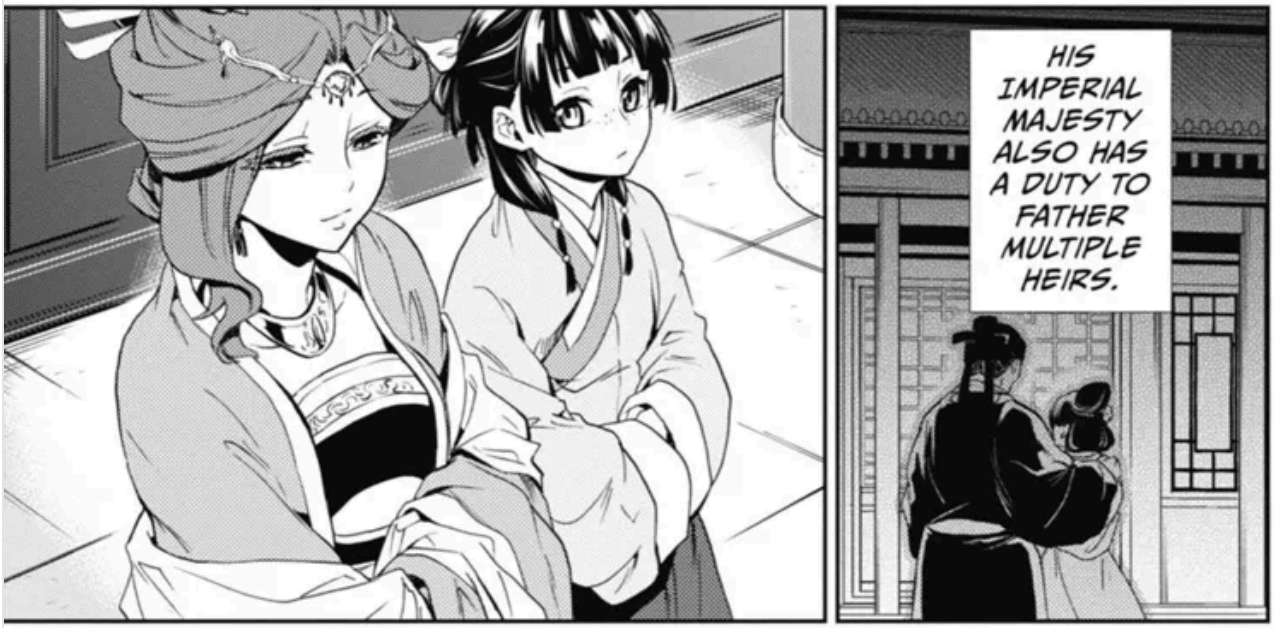
HAVING LIKEWISE GIVEN HER HEART TO THE SOLDIER, THE PRINCESS— AN ADEPT DANCER— PURPOSELY ERRED...
...TO CAUSE THE EMPEROR TO LOSE INTEREST IN HER.
THEIR PLOT WAS A SUCCESS. THE EMPEROR DID NOT LIE WITH THE PRINCESS, AND HER CHASTITY REMAINS INTACT.
THE SOLDIER, MEAN-WHILE, MADE A NAME FOR HIMSELF ...
...AND WHEN IT WAS DECIDED SHE WAS TO BE HIS...
...LADY FUYO BEGAN HER STRANGE NIGHTLY RAMBLES...

...AND SO THE EMPEROR WOULDN'T CARE THAT SHE WOULDN'T BE HIS ANY LONGER...
...SO NONE WOULD DEFLOWER HER, EVEN BY MISTAKE ...
THERE IS, AFTER ALL, A CHANCE ...
I COULD SEE THAT HAPPENING, KNOWING WHAT THE EMPEROR IS LIKE.
...THAT THE LUSTY EMPEROR MIGHT REGAIN INTEREST IN A PRINCESS SO COVETED BY ONE OF HIS MEN.


IF SHE WERE TO SPEND A NIGHT WITH THE EMPEROR, HER REUNION WITH THE SOLDIER AS HIS REWARD WOULD BE POSTPONED.
SINCE LADY FUYO VALUES HER PURITY...
...SHE SURELY WOULD FEEL TOO ASHAMED TO FACE HER CHILDHOOD LOVE IF THE EMPEROR WERE TO TAKE THAT AWAY.

IF I SAID I ENVIED LADY FUYO...
...WOULD THAT MAKE ME AN AWFUL PERSON?

THE EMPEROR ONLY CALLS ON CONSORT GYOKUYO EVERY FEW DAYS.
BUT IT'S NOT JUST COURTLY DUTIES THAT KEEP THE EMPEROR AWAY.

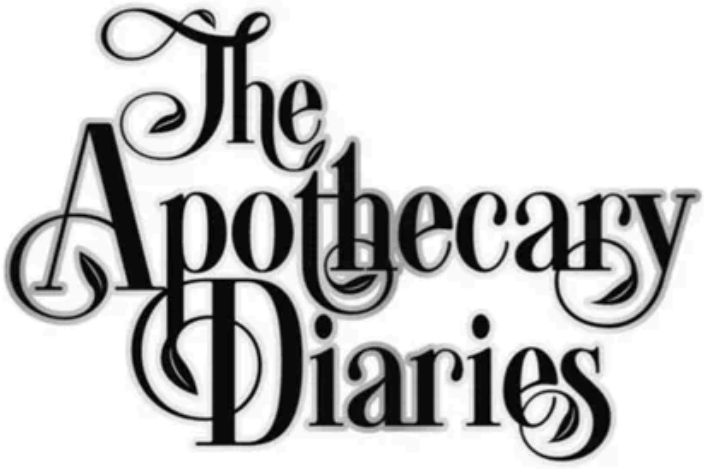

HIS IMPERIAL MAJESTY ALSO HAS A DUTY TO FATHER MULTIPLE HEIRS.

I DON'T THINK SO.

...MUST ENVY THIS HAPPY SCENE.
EVERY-ONE HERE...
SHE PROBABLY DANCED AT THE EAST GATE IN PARTICU-LAR...
...BECAUSE HER BELOVED WAS COMING HOME FROM AN EXPEDI-TION IN THE EAST.
SHE MUST HAVE BEEN PRAYING FOR THE SAFE RETURN OF HER CHILDHOOD FRIEND.

THAT NIGHT, LADY FUYO LOOKED EXCEP-TIONALLY BEAUTIFUL.
NOW I GET IT.
THAT EXQUISITE APPEAR-ANCE...
IT'S BECAUSE SHE'S IN LOVE.
IF LOVE HAS THE POWER TO MAKE WOMEN MORE BEAUTIFUL ...

...I WONDER WHAT IT COULD CURE.
THE APOTHECARY DIARIES • End


The
Apothecary
Diaries

SPECIAL THANKS
Thank you so much for buying *The Apothecary Diaries*, Volume 1!
I hope readers of the wonderful original light novel and new readers alike enjoyed this volume!
And I hope to see you again in the next volume!
From the artist, Nekokurage
ORIGINAL
COMPILATION
ASSISTANTS
Natsu Hyuuga
Touco Shino
Itsuki Nanao
Waka Takase
Ria Shirai
105
My editor & you, my readers
SPECIAL THANKS

TRENDS
BONUS MANGA • Art: Itsuki Nanao
MAOMAO IS CURRENTLY SERVING AS A LADY-IN-WAITING AT THE JADE PALACE.
ZZZZZ...
SLEEPING SOUNDLY NEXT TO ME RIGHT NOW IS MY FRIEND MAOMAO.
HELLO, I'M XIAOLAN, A MAID.
...BUT SHE SEEMS KINDA TIRED TODAY.
Z
SOMETIMES WE GET TOGETHER TO CHAT ABOUT THE LATEST TRENDS AND GOSSIP...
SORRY I FELL ASLEEP!
GASP
I DIDN'T GET TO FIND OUT ANYTHING NEW FROM HER TODAY.
SEE YA LATER!
WELL, BETTER GET BACK TO WORK!
IT'S OKAY!
WHY IS SHE BEHIND ME?

WHY IS YOUR HAIR LIKE THAT?
WH—
WHAT THE —?!
GAH!
?
LIKE WHAT?
HOPE SHE LIKES IT!
I DID HER HAIR IN THE STYLE THAT'S REALLY POPULAR WITH THE MAIDS LATELY.
SPECIAL THANKS
Natsu Hyuuga
Touco Shino
Nekokurage
The editor
And you, the readers
The next volume's going to be good too, so be sure to check it out!
七緒一綺
Itsuki Nanao

Thank you for buying Volume 1 of ***The Apothecary Diaries***.

My name is Natsu Hyuuga. I'm the author of the light novel series this manga is based on. What started off as a light novel I posted online got picked up for publication, and now it's even been turned into a manga. I'm amazed at how far this title has come.

I was overcome with emotion when my story got the color insert illustration treatment, but seeing the characters now come alive frame by frame has allowed me to enjoy the story all over again as a reader too.

The world and characters I couldn't completely describe in the novel are going to be more fleshed out in the manga, so I hope the readers of the novel will enjoy this version as well.

Natsu Hyuuga

Maomao and the delightfully weird cast of characters are now a manga! I hope you thoroughly enjoy the world of The Apothecary Diaries in this retelling that keeps the wit of the novels through its many lovely pages. I hope you especially enjoy Maomao's many facial expressions.
The Apothecary Diaries 1
The Manga
Novel illustrator
しのとうこ
Touco Shino

Story by Itsuki Nanao *Art by* Nekokurage

MAOMAO'S WEIGHT LOSS METHOD: GETTING TOTALLY ABSORBED IN RUNNING AROUND COLLECTING HERBS AS FAST AS POSSIBLE
THERE'S ANOTHER!
DASH
AND ANOTHER!
OOOH, LOOK WHAT I'VE FOUND HERE ...!
DASH
OVER HERE TOO!!
ZOOM
I SURE WORKED UP A GOOD SWEAT.
YOU TOO CAN LOSE FIVE KILOS WITH THIS METHOD!
Story by Itsuki Nanao
Art by Nekokurage

The Apothecary Diaries

Volume 1

Story by
Natsu Hyuuga

Art by
Nekokurage

Compiled by
Itsuki Nanao

Character Design by
Touco Shino

Translation: Julie Goniwich
Lettering: Lys Blakeslee
Cover Design: Andrea Miller
Editor: Tania Biswas

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